

# Mayor Mitchell joins 27 Massachusetts mayors in push to change federal drug policy

Mayor Jon Mitchell has joined with 27 mayors from across Massachusetts to push for a federal law change to allow the Drug Enforcement Agency to pursue inappropriate wholesale prescription drug distribution, which fuels the opioid addiction epidemic that has afflicted cities throughout the Commonwealth and across the country.

“The epidemic of opioid abuse is felt across all areas of our society, and across the country,” said Mayor Mitchell. “It does not discriminate based on gender, race, age, or income – and people across the country addicted to opioids are struggling and too often dying. There is more that federal policymakers can do to help us, and allowing the DEA to pursue inappropriate distribution of prescription drugs would be an important step in the right direction.”

“For the past several years, we and members of our communities have attended the funerals of friends, and the funerals of the children of friends, with sickening regularity,” the mayors wrote. “What we need and demand on the federal level is a Congress that will prioritize our families over the drug industry, a DEA with the enforcement authority and tools it needs to crack down on illegal corporate drug activity; and a drug czar committed to helping us in our fight instead of supporting industry profit at the expense of our children.”

The letter, addressed to the President and Congress, urges that:

The next nominee for the nation’s drug czar be free of financial or other connections to the prescription drug distribution industry, and be of unassailable professional and

personal character; and

That Congress repeal and replace the April 2016 law, passed through a parliamentary procedure without debate, that stripped the DEA of critical enforcement authority; the new law must give the DEA the authority to protect the interests of the public and simply cannot be bought and paid for by the legal drug distribution industry.